Preferential treatment to big firms

878. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to accord preferential treatment to big firms for allocation of captive coal mines;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what would be the fate of large number of small companies after implementation of Government's decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) to (c) It has been decided by the Government to give priority to the power and steel sectors in allocation of coal blocks. It has further been decided that preference in allocation should be given to power projects of 500 MW and above and steel plants with more than one million tonne per annum capacity. Small applicant companies which form a consortium for utilization of a coal block for their captive use are eligible for allocation of coal blocks by the Government. The demands of small companies can also be met through linkage of coal from Public Sector coal companies and through e-auction.

Royalty on coal to Chhattisgarh

†879. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the amount provided to Chhattisgarh Government as royalty on coal during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the rate of providing this amount and when this rate had been fixed;

(c) the date and the basis on which Chhattisgarh Government have asked for increase in this rate; and

(d) the details of the reasons for non-acceptance of the demand for payment of price based royalty?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) The amount of royalty on coal paid to the Government of Chhattisgarh during the last 3 years in as under:—

(Rs. in crore)

2003-04	2004-05	2005-06 (provisional)
491.32	533.47	548.89

(b) The rates of royalty on coal were last revised on 16.08.2002. The existing rates of royalty on coal for various grades are as under:—

Coal Group	Rupees Per Tonne
Group-I Coking Coal SG-I, WG-I	250.00
Group-II Coking Coal WG-II,III Non-coking A,B Semi-coking Gr.-I Semi-coking Gr.-II	165.00
Group-III Coking Coal WG-IV, Non-coking-C	115.00
Group-IV Non-coking D.E.	85.00
Group-V Non-coking F,G	65.00
Group -VI Coal produced in Andhra Pradesh	90.00

(c) The Government of Chhattisgarh has requested that the royalty rates on coal should be revised on *ad-valorem* basis @ 25% of the prices notified by CIL and the revision should be effected after every three years.

(d) A Committee was constituted on 02.06.2005 to consider revision of rates of royalty on coal and lignite. It has submitted its report after

detailed deliberation with all stake holders. The recommendations of the Committee are now under consideration of the Government.

Death of coal miners

880. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 54 members lost their lives in an accident in a mine of Bharat Cooking Coal near Dhanbad;

(b) the causes of the accident;

(c) whether it is also a fact that full safety norms were not in place in the mine which had led to the accident;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether any corrective measures have been taken in the existing safety norms to avert such accidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) Fifty workers lost their lives and four received reportable injury in the disaster at Nagda mine of Bhatdih Colliery, Western Jharia Area in Jharkhand under Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) occurred on 6-9-2006.

(b) to (d) The Mines Act, 1952 and the Rules & Regulations framed there under prescribe safe work procedures in the mines. The Mine management is required to comply with these provisions while working in the mine. Officers of Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS) under Ministry of Labour and Employment carry out regular inspections of the mines. On detection of urgent and immediate danger in mines, DGMS issues improvement notice and also issues prohibitory order under the Mines Act, 1952. It is imperative on the part of mine management to rectify the violations pointed out during the inspection by DGMS officers.

However, a Court of Enquiry has been constituted by the Gvot. of India, Ministry of Labour & Employment, *vide* notification No. S.O. 1756(E) dated 12-10-06 to inquire into the causes and circumstances of the accident occurred at Bhatdih Mine of Bharat Coking Coal Ltd.